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'Let Us Work': Fired New York City Workers Rally in Support of Bill Requiring City to Reinstate Jobs With Back Pay

Hundreds gathered today at New York's City Hall calling for legislation requiring the city to rehire all employees fired over now-rescinded COVID-19 vaccine mandates. Speakers called for back pay and benefits restoration for workers barred from "jobs that they loved."

By John-Michael Dumais

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Members of the New York City Council's Common Sense Caucus today introduced a resolution in support of state legislation to reinstate, with back pay and no legal restrictions, all city employees fired for not complying with the city's COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

Unvaccinated city workers rallied with the council members on the steps of New York's City Hall under the banner, "Let Us Work."

Cosponsored by New York City Council member Joann Ariola and minority leader Joseph Borelli, the resolution advocates for the passage of Senate Bill S7466A, which would make the job reinstatement for unvaccinated workers a matter of state law.

However, the resolution is nonbinding and unlikely to gain passage by the full Council, according to Michael Kane, founder of the advocacy group Teachers For Choice and co-organizer of the event.

Kane told The Defender, "We are calling on all New Yorkers to call their senators

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in the city committees where the bill is currently and ask them to cosponsor the bill."

"We want to know who says yes and who says no," he said. "Three years into this battle and after thousands of New Yorkers have left the city and state, we still have momentum with residents fighting against vaccine mandates in New York City," he said.

The press conference drew about 200 people and was timed with the first anniversary of the end of the city's vaccine mandate for public and private sector workers, which resulted in the termination or resignation of over 1,700 police officers, firefighters, EMTs, teachers and other city employees.

Ariola, chair of the city's Committee on Fire and Emergency Management and member of the Common Sense Caucus, opened the press conference with a statement of support for city workers who lost "jobs that they loved all for refusing to take a vaccine … that is no longer mandated."

Ariola lamented the fact that many of these workers are still unemployed when the city and state have spent "hundreds of thousands of dollars on litigation" to prevent certain members of the city's fire, police, sanitation departments and New York City teachers, healthcare workers and other city workers from returning to work.

"Add it up," she said. "It would be much less than having them return to the workforce and become the heroes that they were meant to be."

The government is requiring former employees to sign a waiver forfeiting their civil service rights and rights to back pay to get their jobs back, Ariola said.

"For many who have unjustly been denied the opportunity to earn a living over the past two years, this is unacceptable," Ariola said. Others in similar situations were permitted to return to work without signing the waiver, she added.

"They will not sign a waiver and they will continue to sue," she added.

"The Wuhan Cover-Up"
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Courts have yielded 'no decision, no movement at all'

Ariola introduced Kane, who lost his 14-plus-year teaching job in the Bronx in late 2021 because of the vaccine mandate and is a plaintiff in one of the lawsuits against the city.

Kane said today was also the first anniversary of several court cases — Kane v. de Blasio, Keil v. The City of New York, and New Yorkers for Religious Liberty (NYFRL) v. City of New York — coming before the 2nd Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, but with "no decision … no movement at all."

"If the courts don't do it, we have to do it in the legislative [branch]," he said.

"It's quite an emotional thing," Kane said, recalling the times he and other unvaccinated people were "called names" and "ostracized."

"But history, while it turns in a long and winding road, it bends in the direction of truth. And that's where we're headed now," he said.

Kane thanked Sen. Andrew J. Lanza for introducing bill S7466A in Albany, the state capital. The bill would require "the reinstatement of certain officers and employees of the city of New York who were dismissed from employment due to a COVID-19 vaccine requirement."

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'How is there not any common-sense logic?'

Kane, firefighter Sal Maida and EMT Jack Lin spoke briefly at the rally, followed by Oren Barzilay, union president of Local 2507, Uniformed EMTs, Paramedics & Fire Inspectors.

Barzilay pointed out that while fired city employees remain jobless, city positions stand vacant and new hires are not mandated to take vaccines.

"How does that make any sense?" He said. "Let them come back, continue the work that they do, help our city, being short as it is with the staff issues."

Borelli criticized the city for sending recruiters "all over the city and into other states" trying to fill open positions when "there are dozens, hundreds of people that used to work for you — they're qualified — that could start working for you tomorrow."

"How is there not any common-sense logic?" he asked, adding, "Sometimes in government, we have to figure out complex problems. This is not one of them."

Near the end of the press conference, a member of the press asked, "Why should the public care about this issue?"

Kane answered:

> "If we don't care about this issue now, it's going to happen again. They're going to do the same thing that they did to us two years ago, again. They're going to pour something into your body, into your children's body for you to access society, for you to get a slice of pizza, for you to go to the library, for you to earn employment, for you to go to school.
>
> "We must say 'Never again!' to that."

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Favorable court rulings failed to help many fired workers

New York City's COVID-19 vaccine mandates for city workers went into effect in October 2021 under former Mayor Bill de Blasio. The strict rules resulted in the termination or resignation of approximately 1,750 city employees, including 36 EMS workers from the fire department and more than 950 Department of Education employees.

The mandates sparked immediate legal challenges from municipal labor unions and grassroots worker rights groups.

"There are three federal cases currently in front of the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals dealing with workers fired and banned from their jobs for being unvaccinated," said Kane on Feb. 6 on CHD.TV's "Good Morning CHD" show.

Among the key cases is Kane v. de Blasio, filed in August 2021 on behalf of Department of Education employees.

After some early favorable rulings, the lawsuits have seen little progress over the last year.

One favorable ruling came In October 2022, when Staten Island Supreme Court

Justice Ralph Porzio overturned the New York City COVID-19 vaccine mandate and ordered that 10 fired city workers receive back pay.

The judge wrote that the city workers had "substantive and procedural due process rights" and that the city didn't have "the power and authority to permanently exclude [them] from their workplace."

But Kane told The Defender that when he returned to his former employer to get his job back, he was told he was "flagged" in the system and needed to wait to be contacted. Two days later, Kane learned that the Department of Education appealed the Porzio decision, temporarily blocking his ability to return to his job.

"When they appealed, the courts gave the benefit of the doubt to the city," he said. "They defer to the city every time."

The appeal could take two or three years, Kane said, "So, we're stuck in appeal right now."

Ongoing efforts to rehire fired workers

Today's push for legislation supporting terminated employees comes after years of advocacy by groups formed in opposition to the vaccine mandates, including demonstrations, legal action and behind-the-scenes engagement with lawmakers, according to Kane.

One of the most prominent groups is Bravest for Choice, formed in 2021 to fight the requirements for firefighters and other first responders to get vaccinated, according to statements by group leader Matthew Connor.

"Facing threats of termination in October of 2021, we organized and marched 20,000 New Yorkers from 9 MetroTech over the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall — in one of the largest labor demonstrations in our city's history," said Connor in remarks given at a Jan. 29 inauguration event for Ariola.

In addition to rallies and a pending lawsuit, Bravest for Choice also worked directly with Ariola and her staff to advocate for rehiring firefighters who had been let go, Connor said.

"Councilwoman Ariola and her dedicated staff have answered that call," he said. "As a direct result, nearly forty frontline workers have been reinstated to their positions."

In the CHD.TV interview, Connor credited advocacy and legal efforts with enabling tangible results in getting terminated firefighters back on duty.

"I really hope all of the politicians out there take heed of this," Kane told The Defender. "This is a voting platform, it's a voting issue."

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John-Michael Dumais

John-Michael Dumais is a news editor for The Defender. He has been a writer and community organizer on a variety of issues, including the death penalty, war, health freedom and all things related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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holisticpoet
3 days ago

It is a shame that these workers and the rest of those who were mandated to take the jab were treated like they are possessions of someone else. Everyone of age must have the right to make their own health choices. If are not allowed this basic right how can anyone call the USA the home of the free?

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John Raymond NO AMNESTY
3 days ago

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https://www.thegatewaypundi...

"CDC Emails Reveal Why Agency Killed Alert on Myocarditis | Facts Matter"
https://www.theepochtimes.c...

"The Covid Lab Origin Case Is Even Stronger Now"
https://www.zerohedge.com/n...

"FOIA'd Emails Reveal Highest-Level Leaders at "Biden White House, HHS, CDC, NIAID, AAP All Knew COVID Vaccines Linked to Myocarditis", Yet Publicly Covered Up Findings."

DailyClout received the third, 131-page release of documents from Attorney Edward Berkovich's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Centers for

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John Raymond NO AMNESTY → GarySummers
2 days ago

God bless you, and people like you. I'm not a mean guy, but these people acted as cowards in a dirty war. They could be hung for Nuremberg Code Violations, Treason in time of undeclared, dirty war, Sabatouge behind enemy lines, Mass murder.
God bless those who see this profound evil

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GarySummers → John Raymond NO AMNESTY
2 days ago

Legions of Family's hope for Justice some Day, for those that have Died, or are now Disabled!

Many in our Govt, Big Pharma, and connected to our Govt have so much "Blood on their Hands!" My Wife almost died twice from the Pfizer Jab, so many have died from Myocarditis! Wife has to take a lot of expensive Meds now to stay alive!

If not Justice in this World, then in the Spiritual World, with other Evil People.

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TheOrneryNurse
2 days ago

New York, Massachusetts and just about every State lost their best and brightest because of discriminatory and unconstitutional mandates. Most unions refused to fight for their members and still got pay raises and bonuses for themselves. The collaborators may be able to retire in comfort with their fat pensions, but the few good men and women of New York City and elsewhere who refused to comply, fought the mandates and were punished for it are the real heroes. #NoAmnesty #NeverAgain #RightSideofHistory #DoNotComply

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Sharing Is Caring 'Still some Colleges MANDATING the Jabs!'
"Cancer Is Striking More "'Young People"', and Doctors Are Alarmed and Baffled:"
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"Coinciditis":
Myocarditis, Pericarditis, Convulsions & Seizures, Arrhythmia, Pulmonary Embolism, Blood Clots, Stroke, Heart Attack, Venous Thromboembolism, Neurological Impairment, Turbo Cancer, Transverse Myelitis, Thromboctopenia, Kawasaki disease, Guillain-Barre, Autoimmune disease and Sudden Death that coincidentally and consistently affects those jabbed with mRNA, lipid nanoparticles and related new gene editing technologies.

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PonyBoy
a day ago

Those who refused the "jab" were smart humans who refused to be guinea pigs for the global extremist elites who did everything they could to kill off as many human beings as possible by experimenting with how much toxin can a human withstand.
Every single one of those sick clucks must be given a speedy trial and incarcerated for the rest of their lives.
Or, give them an option of hanging, an equal justice for the millions they were responsible for killing.

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r2bzjudge
a day ago

VAERS was off the charts with adverse event reports. The NYC mandate endangered the health or life of city workers.

"I really hope all of the politicians out there take heed of this," Kane told The Defender. "This is a voting platform, it's a voting issue."

It should be. The public and NYC city workers were lied to about the safety and efficacy of the Covid shots.

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GarySummers
a day ago

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1.) * "Pregnant Mothers Are Spreading "'Deadly Levels of mRNA"' to Their Babies, Study Warns"*
A new official study has warned that vaccinated pregnant mothers are spreading deadly levels of mRNA to their unborn babies via the placenta and umbilical cord blood.
https://thepeoplesvoice.tv/...

2.) "CDC Bombshell: 'Fatal Heart Attack Risk Skyrockets Post-COVID Vaccination"'
Scientists at the CDC have published a bombshell report warning that the risk of a fatal heart attack or stroke skyrockets after receiving the mRNA COVID vaccination.
https://thepeoplesvoice.tv/...

3.) "Moderna Finally Admits mRNA Vaccines Are 'Highly Toxic to Human Health"'
The scientists at Moderna have finally admitted what the rest of us have known for years – the mRNA Covid vaccines are "highly toxic to human health".
https://thepeoplesvoice.tv/...

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lisa letto
2 days ago

Hey that's exactly how many Housing Authority employees were arrested for corruption. Give them those

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Simons
7 hours ago

Under EUA legislation, mandates are clearly illegal. Some smart lawyers should go after the Comirnaty smoke and mirrors, which was an attempt by FDA to license the vaccine yet maintain total immunity from liability by never actually manufacturing the approved vaccine so the original could be mandated before they were able to get it on the childhood schedule. So many judges believe the vaccine was licensed so the mandates were ok. Was this move legal? I don't think so. I don't see the lawyers addrssing this.

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